

In the Specification:

**Please amend paragraph [0011] as follows:**

Variations of light or reflectance into the resist layer can occur. ~~To~~ Therefore, according to another embodiment, to reduce variations of reflectance, an antireflective coating (ARC) can be deposited on the substrate prior to depositing the photoresist layer. Various types of ARC can be used. The ARC comprises, for example, an organic material such as the AZ<sup>®</sup> BARLi<sup>®</sup> -II coating material manufactured by Clariant AG. Non-organic materials with suitable optical properties, such as titanium nitride (TiN) or silicon carbide (Si<sub>x</sub>O<sub>y</sub>C<sub>z</sub>), are also useful.

**Please amend paragraph [0013] as follows:**

In accordance with the invention, the solvent of the resist layer is evaporated without using elevated temperatures. The solvent is removed by reducing the pressure of the environment, which causes the boiling point of the solvent to drop. A low pressure or vacuum environment accelerates the evaporation of the solvent without the use of elevated baking temperatures. The pressure of the environment can be, for example, about 1 Pa to less than  $1 \times 10^5$  Pa. For example, a moderate vacuum pressure of less than ~~10kPa~~ 10kPa can be used to evaporate the solvent of a thin layer of resist comprising a thickness of 1 $\mu$ m or less at about room temperature. The solvent comprises, for example, propylene glycol monomethyl ether acetate (PGMEA), ethylacetate or cyclohexanol. Other types of solvents are also useful. Evaporation is accelerated without the use of elevated baking temperatures, which may induce changes in the mechanical or chemical properties of the photosensitive materials. In one embodiment, temperatures raised slightly above room temperature may also be used in combination with the vacuum environment to accelerate the evaporation process. Different combinations of

temperature and vacuum conditions may be provided, depending on the type of solvent used and its associated boiling behavior.